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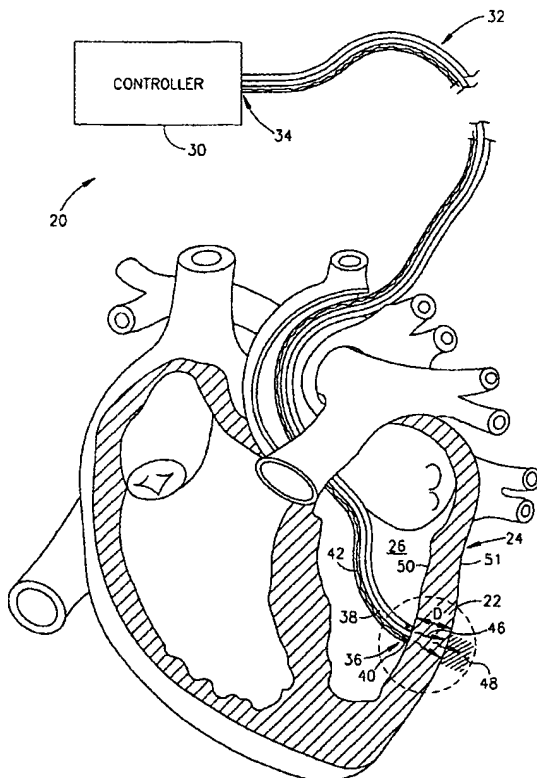
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PERFORMING MYOCARDIAL REVASCULARIZATION



(57) Abstract: Apparatus for forming a hole in a region of the heart muscle wall of a patient undergoing myocardial revascularization comprising: means for removing tissue from the region to form the hole; a light source that illuminates the region with light that generates photoacoustic waves therein; at least one acoustic sensor that generates signals responsive to the photoacoustic waves; and a controller that receives the signals and processes them to determine a characteristic of the region useable to control the means for removing tissue.

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